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The Pope's words at the Angelus prayer

At midday today, the Holy Father Francis appeared at the window of his study in the Vatican Apostolic Palace to pray the Angelus with the faithful and pilgrims gathered in Saint Peter's Square.

A grandmother appeared alongside the Pope, on the occasion of the celebration of the World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly, with a young participant in the upcoming World Youth Day.

The following are the Pope's words of introduction to the Marian prayer:

Before the Angelus

Dear brothers and sisters, *buongiorno!*

Today's Gospel offers us the parable of the wheat and the weeds (cf. *Mt 13:24-43*). A farmer, who has sown good seed in his field, discovers that an enemy by night has sown dandel in it, a plant that looks very similar to wheat, but is a weed.

In this way, Jesus talks about our world, which in effect is like a *large field*, where God sows wheat and the evil one sows dandel, and therefore good and bad grow together. Good and bad grow together. We see this from the news, in society, and even in the family and in the Church. And when, along with the good wheat, we see bad weeds, we want to tear them up immediately, to make a "clean sweep". But today the Lord warns us that to do this is a temptation: one cannot create a perfect world, and one cannot do good by hastily destroying what is bad, because this has even worse effects: one ends up, as we say, "throwing the baby away with the bathwater".

There is, however, a second field where we can clean up: it is *the field of our heart*, the only one where we can intervene directly. There, too, there is wheat and dandel; indeed, it is precisely from there that both of them expand into the great field of the world. Brothers and sisters, our heart, in fact, is the field of freedom: it is not a

sterile laboratory, but rather an open and therefore vulnerable space. To cultivate it properly, it is necessary on the one hand to take constant care of the delicate shoots of goodness, and on the other, to identify and uproot the weeds, at the right moment. So let us look within and examine what happens a little, what is growing in me, what grows in me that is good and evil. There is a good method for this: it is the examination of conscience, which is seeing what happened today in my life, what struck my heart and which decisions I made. And this serves precisely to verify, in the light of God, where the bad weeds and the good seed are.

After the field of the world, and the field of the heart, there is a third field. We can call it *the neighbour's field*. They are the people we associate with every day, and whom we often judge. How easy it is to recognize their weeds, how we like to "flay" others! And how difficult it is, instead, to know how to see the good grain that is growing! Let us remember, though, that if we want to cultivate the fields of life, it is important to seek first and foremost the work of God: to learn to see the beauty of what the Lord has sown, the sun-kissed wheat with its golden ears, in others, in the world and in ourselves. Brothers and sisters, let us ask for the grace to be able to see it in ourselves, but also in others, starting from those close to us. It is not a naïve perspective; it is a believing one, because God, the farmer of the great field of the world, loves to see goodness and to make it grow to make the harvest a feast!

So today too, we can ask ourselves some questions. Thinking of the *field of the world*: do I know how to resist the temptation to "bundle all the grass together", to sweep others aside with my judgments? Then, thinking of the *field of the heart*: am I honest in seeking out the bad weeds in myself, and decisive in throwing them into the fire of God's mercy? And, thinking of the *neighbour's field*: do I have the wisdom to see what is good without being discouraged by the limitations and limits of others?

May the Virgin Mary help us to cultivate patiently what the Lord sows in the field of life, in my field, in the neighbour's, in everyone's field.

After the Angelus

Dear brothers and sisters!

Today, while many young people are preparing to depart for World Youth Day, we celebrate the World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly. This is why I have next to me a young person and a grandmother: grandson and grandmother. A round of applause to both of them! May the proximity of the two Days be an invitation to promote an alliance between the generations, in the sharing of experiences and reciprocal care between the young and the elderly. Let us not forget them. And let us applaud all the grandfathers and grandmothers! Louder!

Here, and in many countries, we are experiencing extreme climatic events: on the one hand, various regions are affected by anomalous heatwaves and struck by devastating fires; on the other, in a number of places there are storms and floods, like those that have swept across South Korea in recent days. I am close to those who suffer and those who are assisting the victims and the displaced. And please, I reiterate my appeal to the leaders of Nations, that something more tangible be done to limit polluting emissions: it is an urgent challenge and cannot be postponed; it affects everyone. Let us protect our common home!

And now I would like to draw attention to the ordeal that continues to unfold for migrants in the northern part of Africa. Thousands of them, amid unspeakable suffering, have been trapped and abandoned in desert areas for weeks. I appeal in particular to European and African heads of State to provide urgent relief and aid to these brothers and sisters. Let the Mediterranean no longer be a theatre of death and inhumanity. May the Lord enlighten the minds and hearts of all, inspiring sentiments of fraternity, solidarity and hospitality.

And let us continue to pray for peace, especially for dear Ukraine, which continues to suffer death and destruction, as unfortunately occurred last night in Odessa.

I greet you all, Romans and pilgrims from Italy and many countries, in particular those from Brazil, Poland, Uruguay... there are many of you! Also, the students from Buenos Aires and the faithful of the diocese of Legnica, Poland. I also greet the "*Quarant'anni dopo*" cycling tour group from Cogorno, participants in the "*Pedalar pela Paz*", and the children received by several communities in Lazio.

I wish you all a good Sunday, and please, do not forget to pray for me. And let us also pray for this grandmother, this grandson, and with all grandparents and with grandchildren.

Enjoy your lunch, and *arrivederci!*
